

“Concerning all acts of initiative and creation, there is one elementary truth— that the moment one definitely commits oneself, Providence moves too.”

— Johann Wolfgang Van Goethe

THE FIRST PRINCIPLE: Great Purpose Builds A Great Team

Common Purpose

Whatever your business, if you effectively communicate to your workforce the ways your company is helping to create a better world, your inspirational power and competitive advantage are strengthened. Nothing stronger brings people together than a higher common purpose. This is real soul work because it involves helping others and being of service.

Commonality and community are exactly what we are looking for in the place where we spend most of our waking hours. We do not check our beliefs and faith at the front door when we go to work. We bring them with us. Good leaders know this. They know that our collective spirit can create a great team, and that power and unity come from the values and beliefs we agree upon—our common ground. Those are the things that guide us to magnificence within our company.

We have all seen and read about the miracles that happen when a group of individuals are challenged to do the impossible. These stories of bravery, tenacity, and determination are accounts that create our history and culture, and help to establish our heroes and traditions. Think of the great human events in our Holy Books like Moses leading the Israelites to the Promised Land or Saint Francis founding an order of devotion and teaching that lives on today. In history there are events such as our own American Revolution and stories such as Washington crossing the Delaware to defeat the British—actually Hessian mercenaries—at Trenton. The great firsts in innovation, science, and technology all required a team that was

inspired. Henry Ford, Steven Jobs of Apple Computer, and Herb Kelleher, Co-Founder of Southwest Airlines all shared a vision of greatness that activated their team. Remember the courage of the Apollo 13 astronauts and the heroism of the mission control team that saved them? In sports, we can witness daily the success of one team after another that is lifted to do the impossible by the winning purpose they share. Remember the “Amazing New York Mets” when they first got started? How about the football teams that made it to the Super Bowl against all odds?

During the 2002 Super Bowl, the heavily favored Los Angeles Rams were tied with the New England Patriots, but during the last 33 seconds of the game a 48 yard field goal kicked by the Patriots’ Adam Vinatieri won the championship.

The Patriots’ owner, Robert Kraft, during his acceptance of the Vince Lombardi Trophy said, “Spirituality and faith is the cornerstone of our country. Tonight, we are all Patriots.”

The Patriots’ coach and team members all spoke of their mutual bond and belief in one another. Their belief was as much responsible for winning that game as anything else.

Our Common Values

Spirituality joins people based on commonly accepted universal principles such as:

The right of people to be free;
That justice is blind to race, color, religion or national origin;
That it is wrong to kill, steal or commit adultery;
That laws are of humankind rather than nations;

All religions believe in The Golden Rule, charity, veracity, grace and forgiveness, prayer, Divine authority, and love—especially love.

Most people can agree upon common spiritual values, whereas many of our religious beliefs often create a wall of disagreement. Religion does not belong in the workplace because it promotes disagreement and separation. Spirit does belong where it can become the instrument of our oneness.

I think of some other great experiences I have had with groups such as the Jaycees, which regularly took on insurmountable tasks like putting together a haunted house for charity in a few short weeks, or organizing a mammoth Special Olympics event. Deep within each and every one of us is a sense that we can achieve the impossible. That *knowing* is put there by our Creator who reminds us that this is our destiny.

Our Mission

At Adams and Adams, we would regularly accomplish extraordinary things such as covering all our accounts with half our members on a snowy winter night, putting together a team at a moment's notice to clean up a customer's flooded office building, or outperforming the big guys for a hotly contested contract. Dedicated members often worked above and beyond the call of duty because they believed in the fabric, superiority, and greatness of our struggling company.

At Adams and Adams, our mission statement of *building trusting, caring relationships through excellence in cleaning* spoke of the sincerity of our commitment to the people that made our company possible. In the army, an officer is taught to take care of his or her mission, including the people under them. One depends upon the other. We cannot accomplish our business mission without our members and our members would be without a

duty to fulfill if the mission were to be neglected. Yes, it is a balancing act, but one that we learn to achieve by doing our Inner Work—the work that is reflected in our ten principles.

An agreement on a common higher purpose or goal can enable a once fragmented business group to do unbelievable things. Hard times often do bring out the best in us. So does helping others. During the September 11th attack, our whole country came together like one great team. We announced our solidarity by the flags that we displayed everywhere. Millions upon millions of dollars were raised for the victims of the attack.

When a company decides to raise money for a cause that its members champion, nothing will stop them from making their goal. And nothing will stop you if your team is on the same page, enlisted by a trust and belief that what they are doing will somehow make the world a better place.

Exemplary Businesses

This book is not written as a research project of businesses that reflect the values, culture and spirit of which I write. However, I would like to give some examples of businesses that have touched us in a positive way.

Working Assets, a local and long-distance telephone provider out of San Francisco, CA is one of those companies. I have experienced the results of their teamwork and their socially conscious approach to doing business. Before obtaining Working Assets as our provider, I had MCI, a division of World Com. I had switched to MCI because the rates were really low. But in the long run, it cost me much more than dollars by compromising my values and not maintaining my commitment to do business with “honorable” companies. The first indication I got that MCI lacked honor .was that they began calling me shortly after I received my monthly phone bills to remind me that my payment was due on receipt. When I

told them that the bill had been paid, they insisted that it took two weeks for a payment to reach them and get credited even though it only took three or four days for the same process to occur at other companies. I finally got fed up getting the calls and did start paying the bills upon receipt, just to quiet this “monster.” It occurred to me that they were trying to increase their cash flow to assist in their failed merger with *Sprint*. In hindsight, it appears they were also doing it to stay afloat. Then I was charged for two one-minute phone calls made to Afghanistan. I don’t even know anyone in Afghanistan. Even though their customer service representative said they would credit me for the calls, they never did. And when I made a twenty-three minute call to New Zealand, the bill was \$63.00. When I complained they informed me that I had to have a “special program” for reduced rates on international dialing. I was furious and dropped them after my brief but painful relationship.

I signed up with *Working Assets*, which I had heard about from *Interfaith Fellowship* in Manhattan. Their rates were a little bit higher but the difference in the customer service, integrity and spirit of the company was immense. *Working Assets* gives a percentage of my monthly charges to my designated charity, *Amnesty International*. On the monthly bill they keep me updated about prisoners of conscience who I can aid in receiving justice by writing a letter or, for a small fee, have *Working Assets* do it for me. Monthly, they also give me a list of new socially conscious or environmentally important books that have been written. Their bills and envelopes are all printed on recycled paper with soy-based ink and when I talk to a member of their customer service team, the essence of their corporate culture comes bubbling through. Even though my relationship with *Working Assets* is from the bottom up, the experience I have with them comes from the top down.

That same philosophy enables our team to work as one and to save the day when competition is looming over us. The strength of spirituality might seem like a contradiction when we are on the offensive. But it is *not* if we avoid attacking or blaming others and focus on the reasons for our vulnerability and the methods for strengthening our company. Attack not your competitors personally but, rather, lead the charge that will propel your company to greater performance through integrity, and the competition will copy you, becoming envious followers. Our single-minded aggressiveness conflicts with our desire to be part of a team. Individuality and team spirit are both important to our business. Spirituality incorporates and encourages both.

Spirit At Work

When we perceive in our soul—our Spirit—that what we are doing will somehow create a better life for others, make this a better world over all, lead to a cure for cancer, break down barriers to the creation of a worldwide community, or help to build a franchise of companies that will give greater opportunities to those who have little hope, then a higher common purpose overshadows our individual ego-based needs.

These and other principles that embrace universal truths—your company values and ethics belong here too—are the very reasons we are working together. They form the basis for success that encourages growth, profitability and lasting value.

Never underestimate the power of our spirit to create a workplace that is wonderful to be in, exciting to share, and filled with meaningful purpose. Our desire for sharing the gifts we inherited and to achieve a higher common purpose through service to others is the guiding force behind a successful enlightened business.

In summary, the First Principle: *A great purpose builds a great team*, emphasizes the synergy of your collective being in the form of your work unit. It is upside down in relation to the notion that money, power and glamour builds a great team. The Second Principle will introduce you to the most powerful tool you can use to take your company on to the next level of achievement – *living in the moment*.

***“A universal theology is impossible,
but a universal experience is not only possible but necessary”***
— A Course in Miracles®

*“The important thing is not to stop questioning.
Curiosity has its own reason for existing.
One cannot help but be in awe when he contemplates the
mysteries of eternity, of life,
of the marvelous structure of reality.
It is enough if one tries merely to comprehend
a little of this mystery every day.
Never lose a holy curiosity.”*

—Albert Einstein